

SOUTHERN CONSERVATION TRUST

The Ridge Nature Area Update

**City of Fayetteville
February 4, 2016**



Our Mission

Southern Conservation Trust enhances quality of life by making greenspace accessible, conserving natural resources and providing environmental education in our communities, for today's and future generations.

Our Goals

1. Preserve land & our rural character
2. Protect habitats & natural resources
3. Enhance greenspace for education & passive recreation
4. Increase awareness of Environmental Stewardship

Our Background

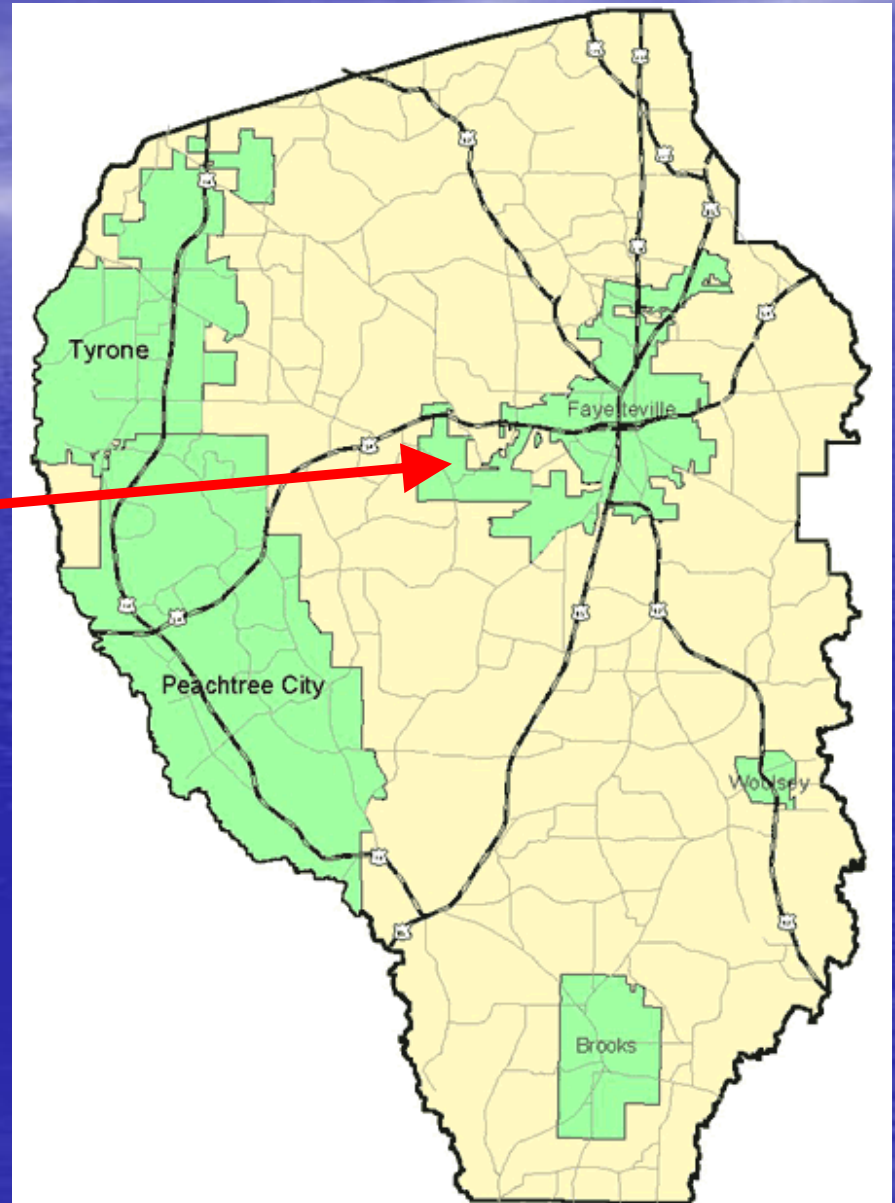
- ❖ Nationally Accredited 2015
- ❖ GA DNR Conservation Program qualified land trust
- ❖ Achieved GuideStar Gold Level
- ❖ Founded in 1993 as a charitable, nonprofit land trust



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The Ridge Nature Area Location

**off Hwy. 54
415 Burch Road**



History

- City acquired the property to stop proposed subdivision
- Possible usage thoughts included an impoundment (reservoir) or passive recreation
- The property was clear cut in the 1820's and farmed until 1960's which allowed invasives and "old growth" trees & vegetation to take over. Now the goal is to increase biodiversity through restoration projects.

History

In the 2005 Fayetteville Comprehensive Plan:

- The Ridge Nature Area is identified on the map as a dedicated "Greenspace/Openspace"
- "Greenspace - Area of protected open space established for recreation, alternative transportation, or conservation purposes. Includes ecological, cultural and recreational amenities."

In 2011, SCT was engaged to plan and develop a passive recreational nature area

No interest by regulatory agencies to oversee manage, or fund the nature preserve.





Audiences



Families



Youth



Paddlers



**Outdoors
Enthusiasts**



Bikers



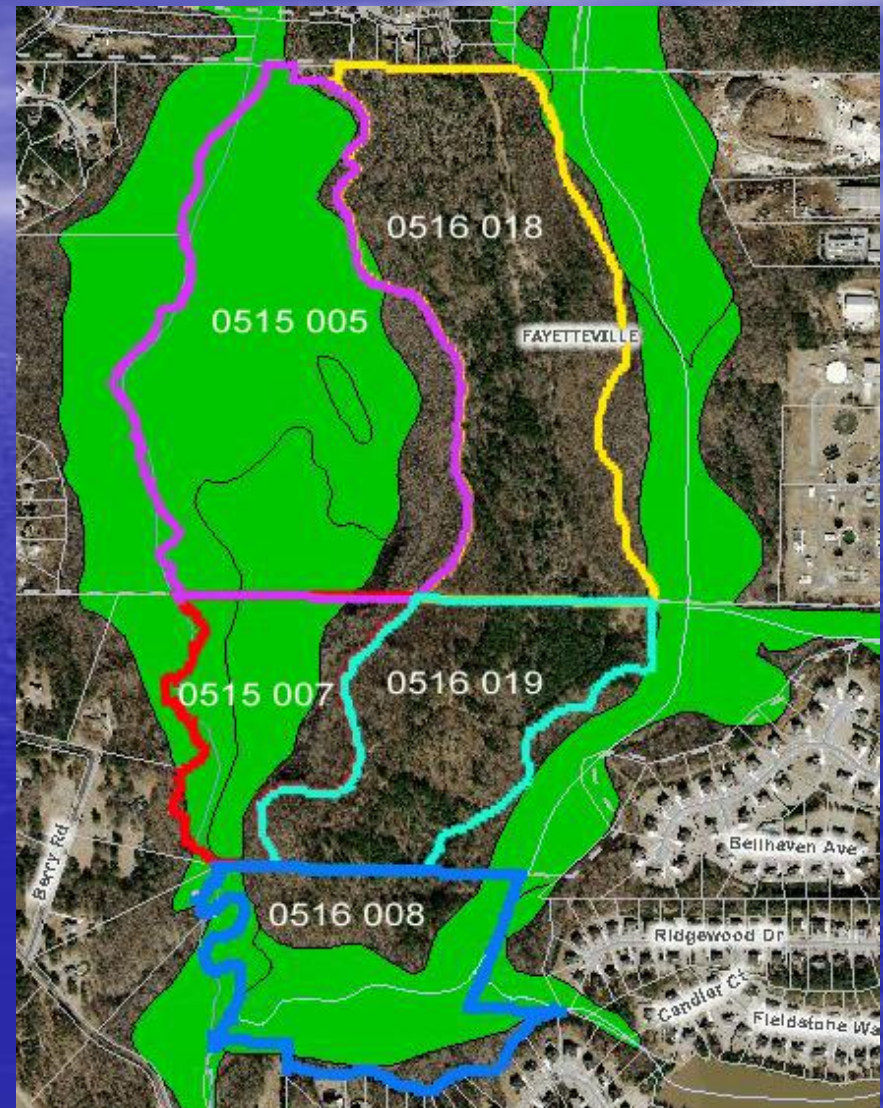
Pets



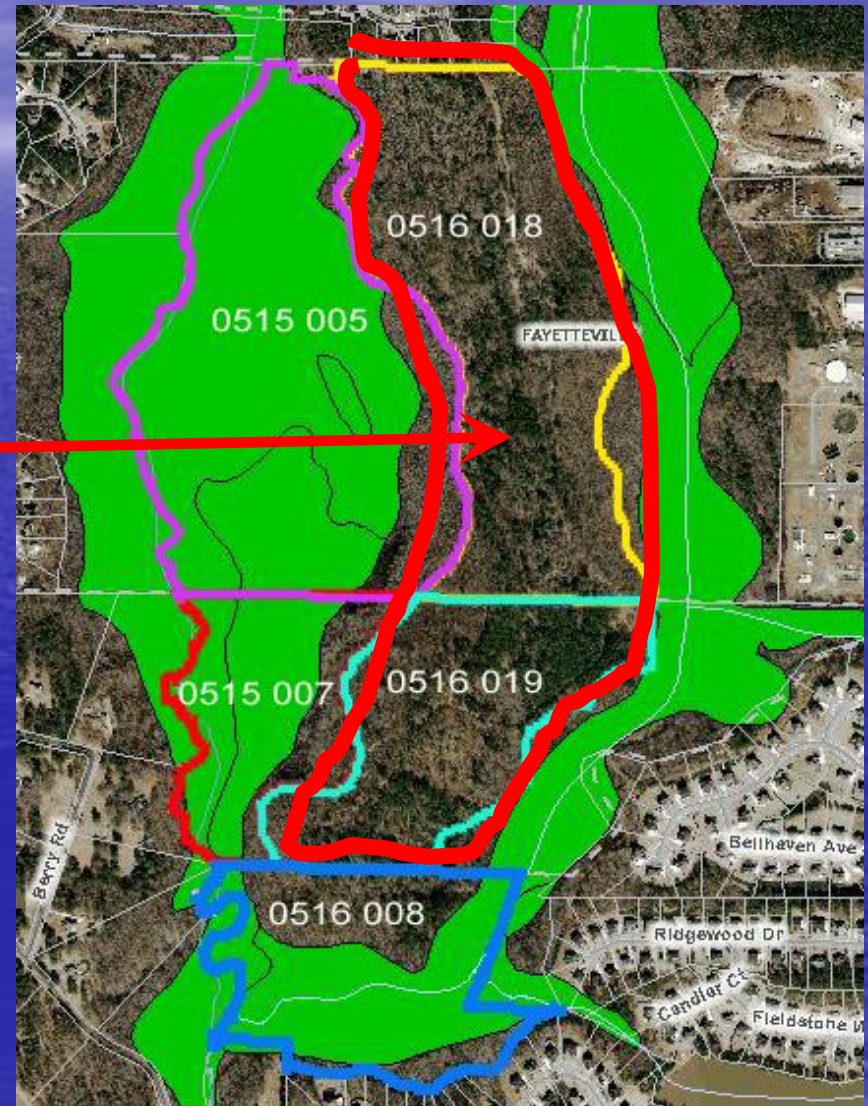
Scouts

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**Nature Area
consists of
308 acres
with approx.
100 acres of
uplands**



Uplands Focus Area



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Original Farm Drives



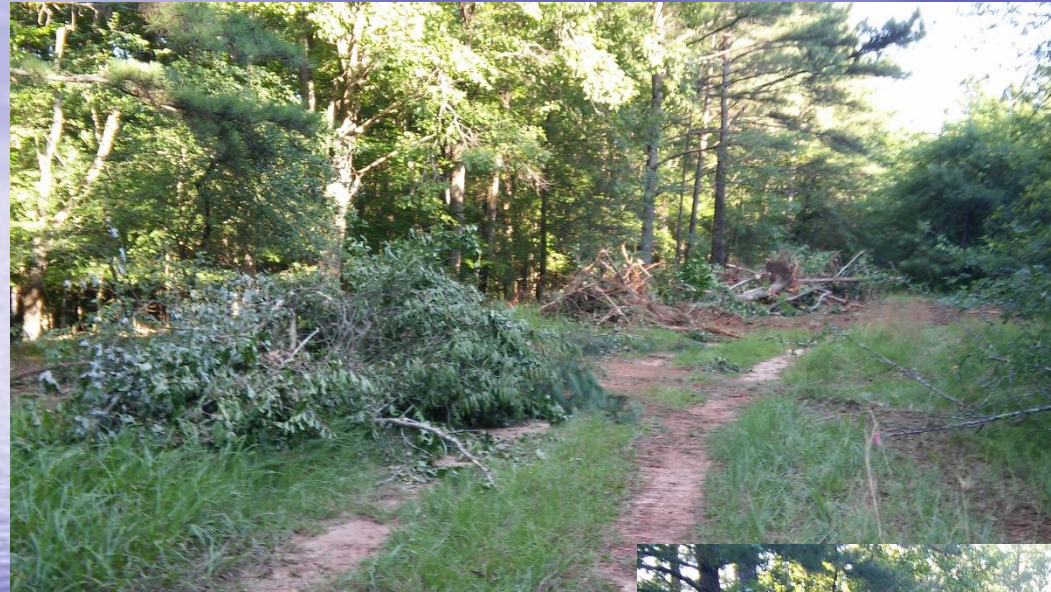
Entry



Exit

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Original Farm Drives



**Plan specifically
followed the
old drive to
minimize impact.**



Park Drive & Trail Entries

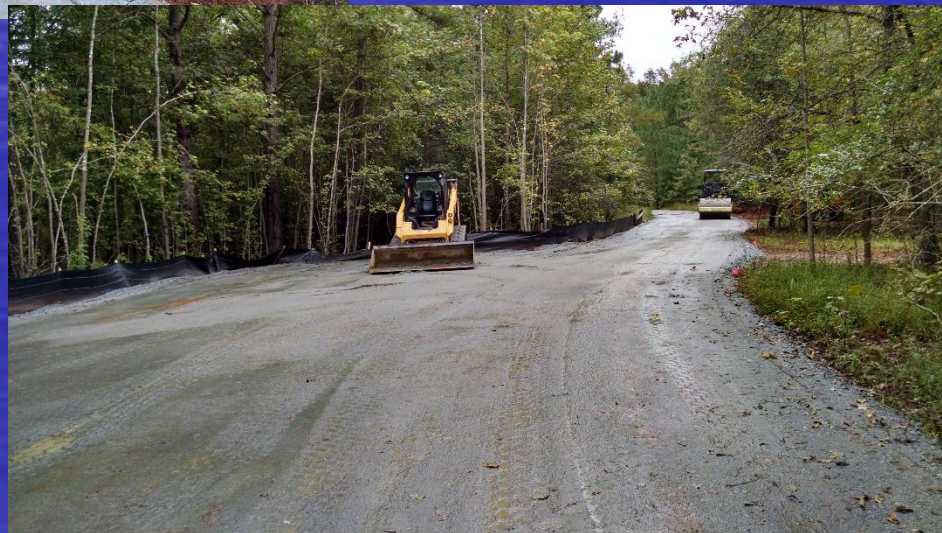


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Established Drives



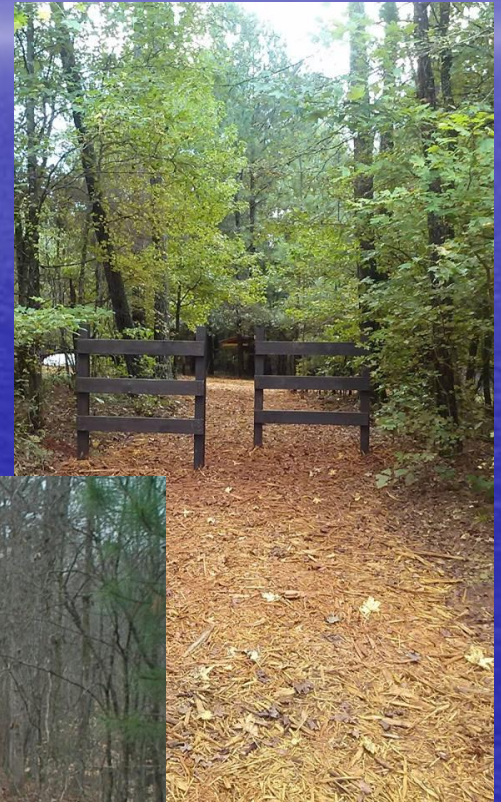
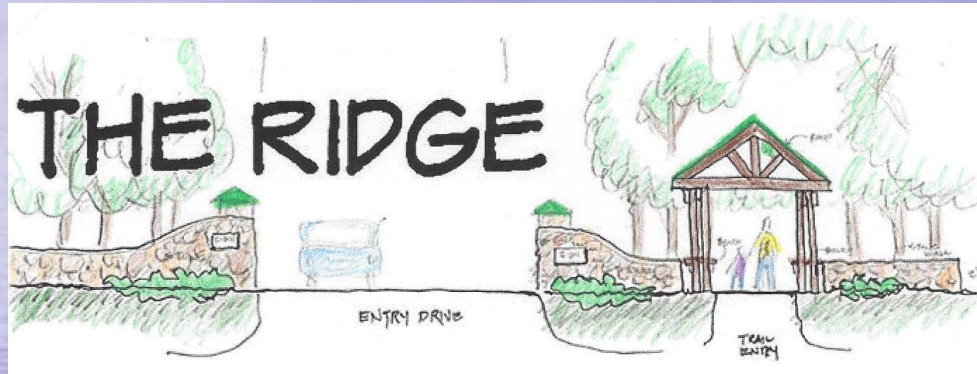
Entry



Exit

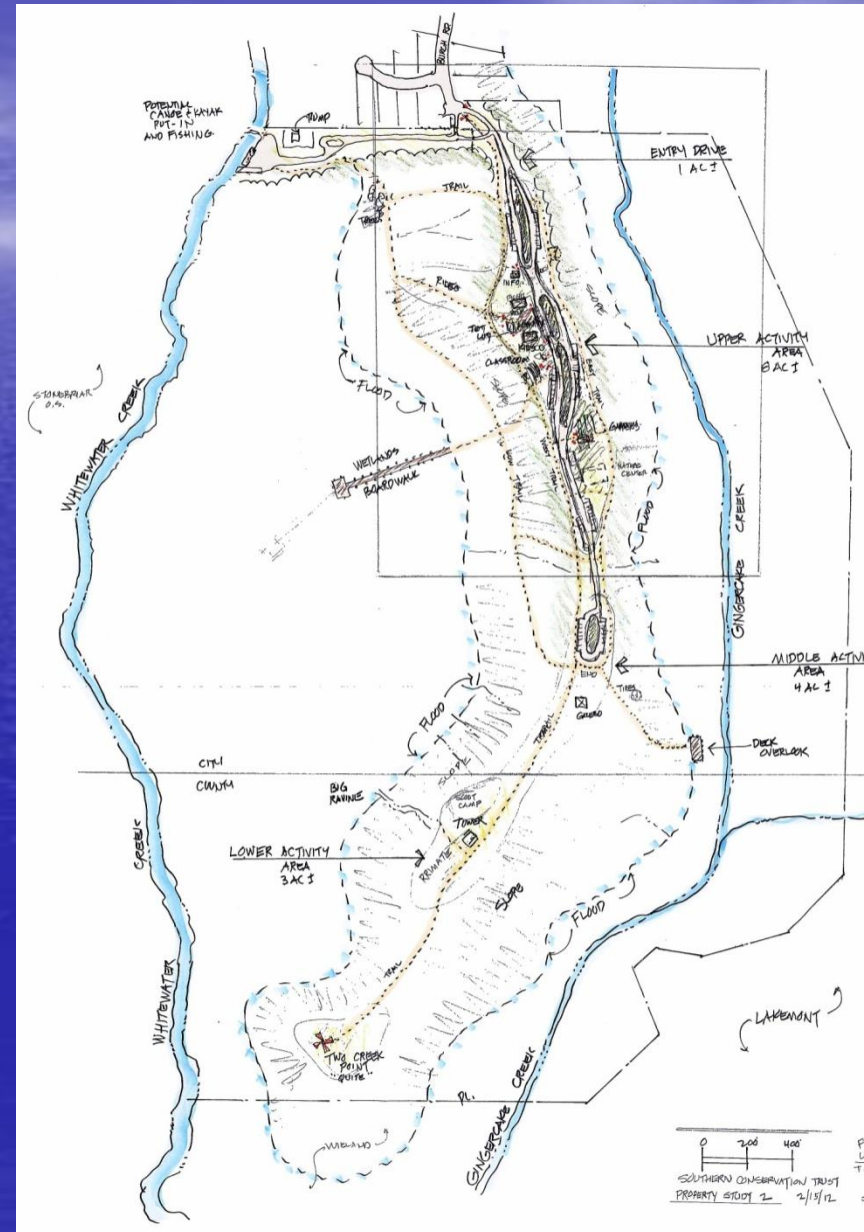
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Park Entrance



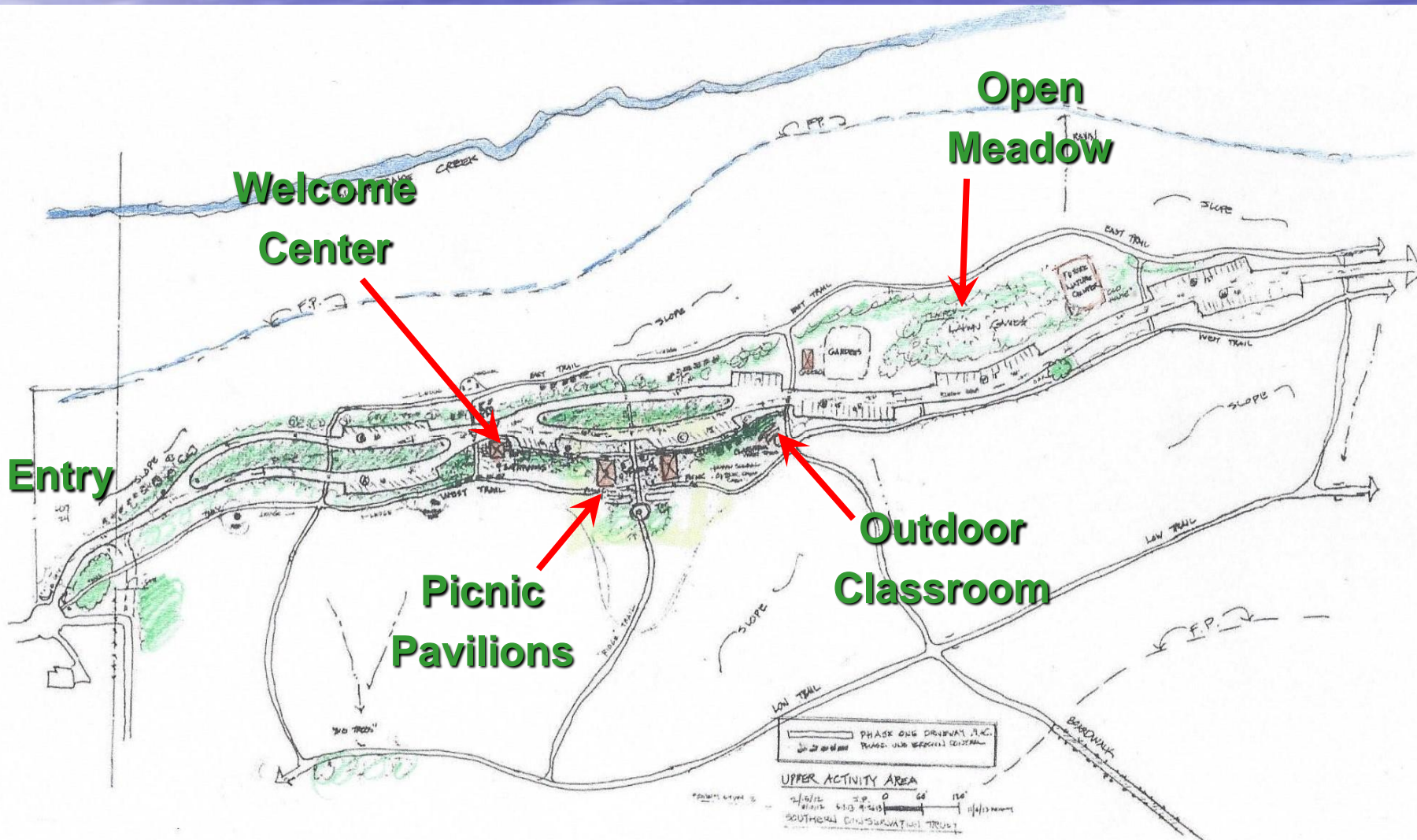
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**Park areas
based on
activity
levels
to utilize
existing
clearings**



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Upper Activity Area



Original areas



Meadow

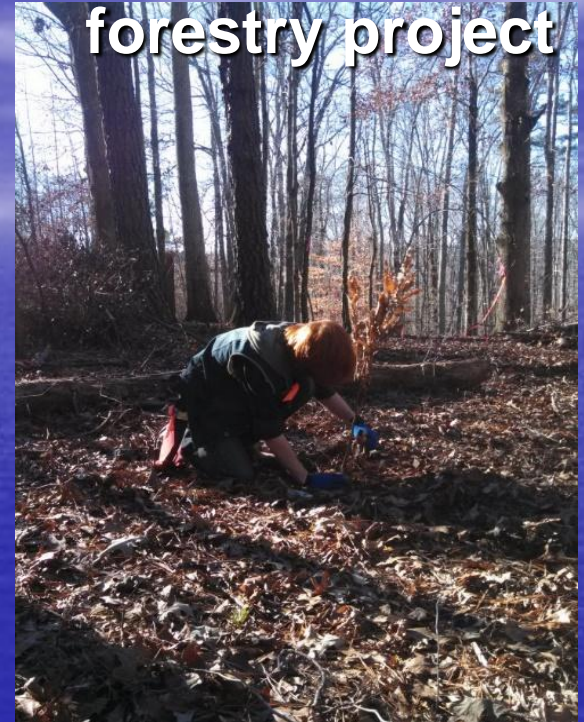
Ridge Trail







Enhancement Impact

- ✓ Less than 3% of the 308 acres will be impacted
- ✓ Original farm land was compromised with minimal plant diversity
- ✓ Monthly bird counts since 2013 has seen increase in species varieties
 - 2013 = 90 individuals & 24 species
 - 2015 = as high as 621 individuals & 93 species (56 regular)
- ✓ Notable Tree Inventory - # 14 specimens, i.e. large dogwood

**Cameron's
forestry project**



Enhancement Impact - Biodiversity

- # The Ridge Nature Area
- 

Habitat Restoration

Youth Service Projects

Meadow Habitats (#1)(#2)
Clear canopy and identified invasive species. Plant Piedmont meadow weeds and seedlings.

Forest Habitat (#3)
Canopy and undergrowth clearing. Plant Piedmont mask bearing trees and shrubs.

Multi-Purpose Trail
Foot Path
Trail Post Signs

MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL
SPONSORED BY THE SOUTHSIDE CYCLING CLUB

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LANDS FOR LIFE

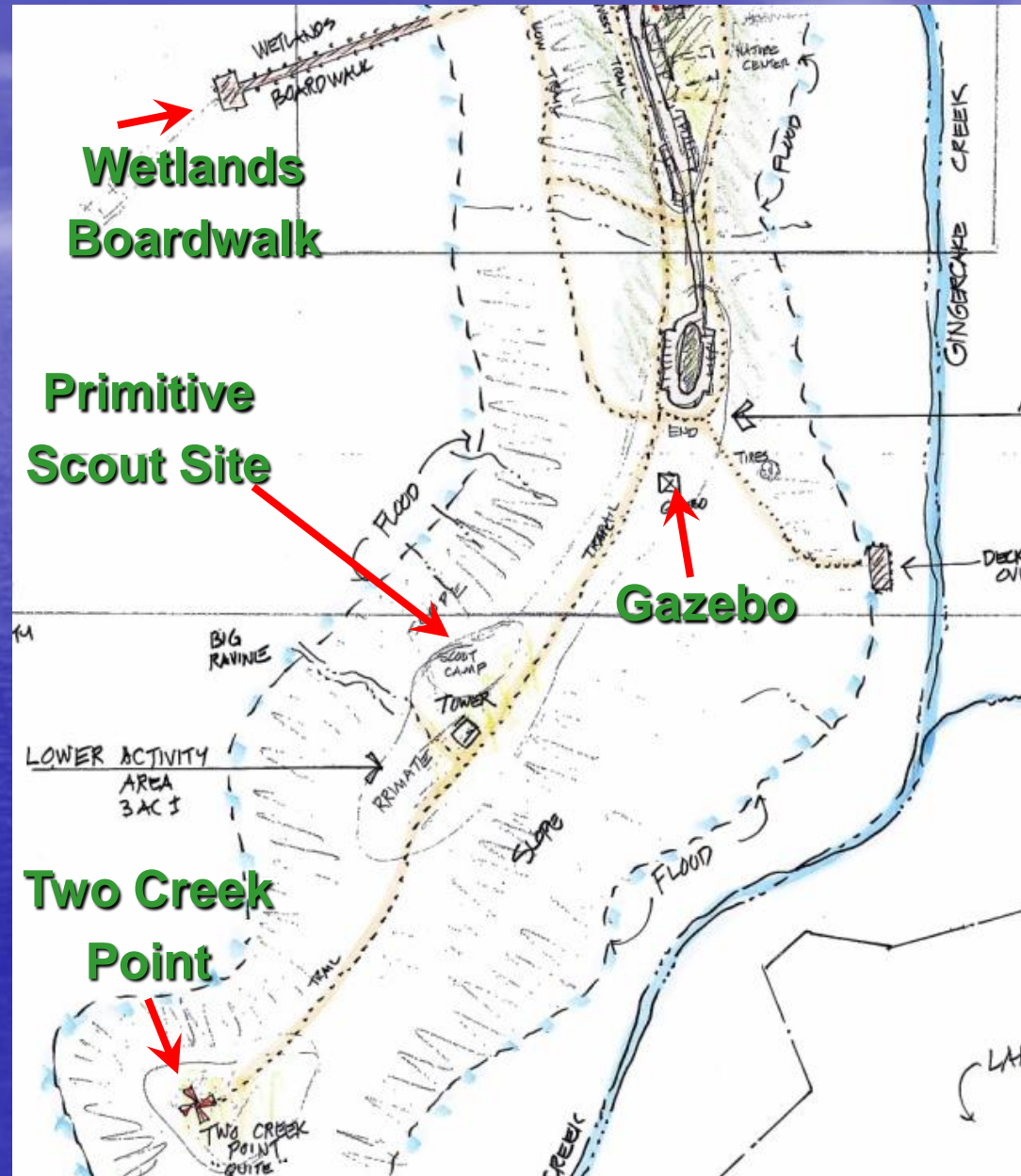
SouthSide CYCLING CLUB

Trail System sponsored by the SouthSide Cycling Club and Southern Conservation Trust

Edition 23SEP15

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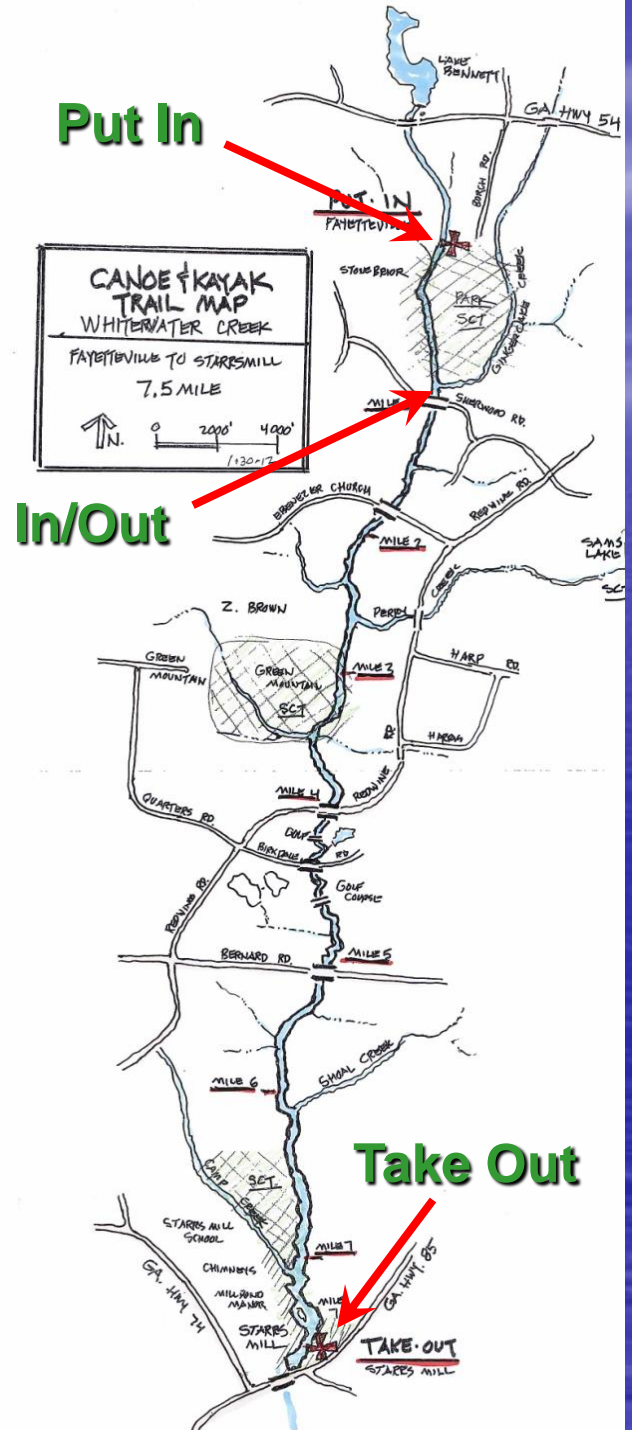
Lower Activity Level



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Water Trail

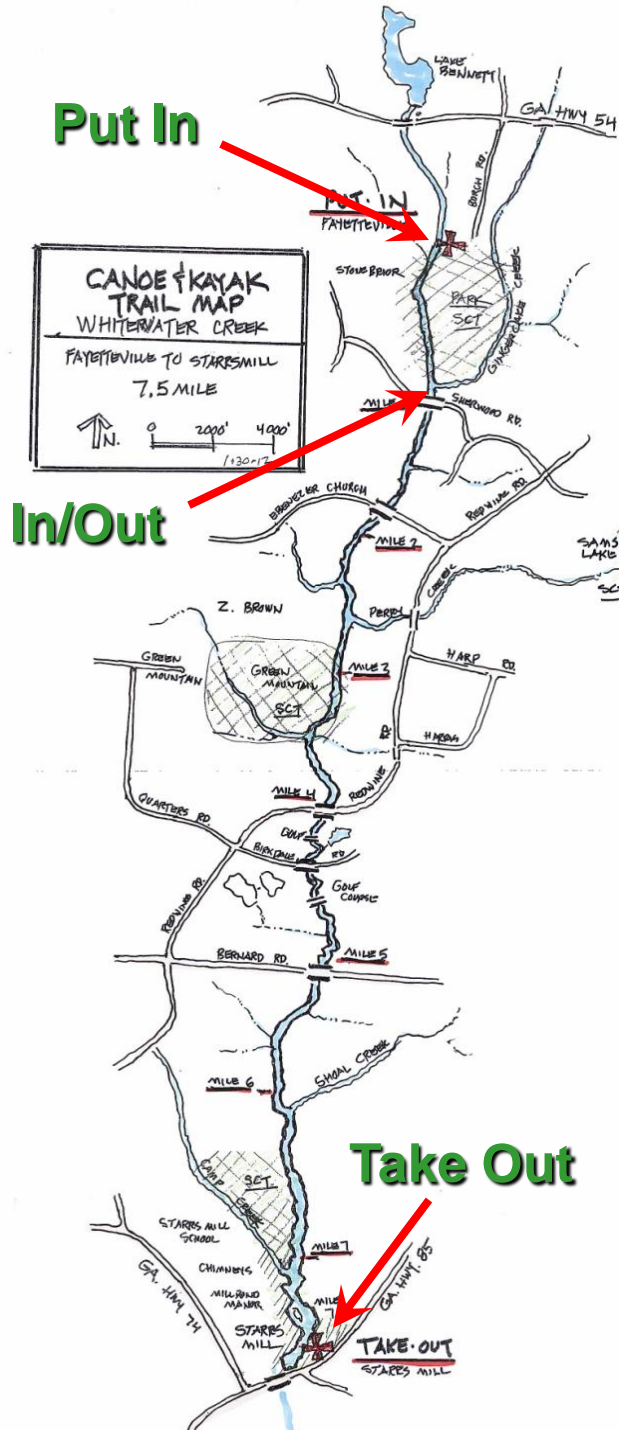
Whitewater
Creek
Fayetteville
to
Starrs Mill
7.5 miles



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Water Trail

- NWP Permit approved
Reviews by DNR &
USF&W
- GA EPA Stream buffer
variance in process



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Accomplishing our Work

Memberships

In-Kind

Civic Clubs

Scout Projects

Donations

Partnerships

Sponsorships

Stewardship

Community Support

Grants

Volunteer Groups

University Researchers

Environmental Expertise



Ridge – Bat Houses



Scout Projects



Scout camp area



13



Entrance kiosk

Turtle Shelters



Trail bench kiosk

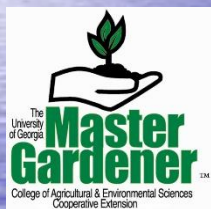
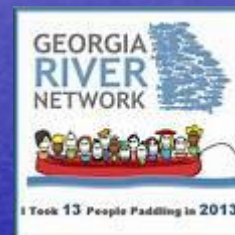


Foot bridge





Partners



Community Support

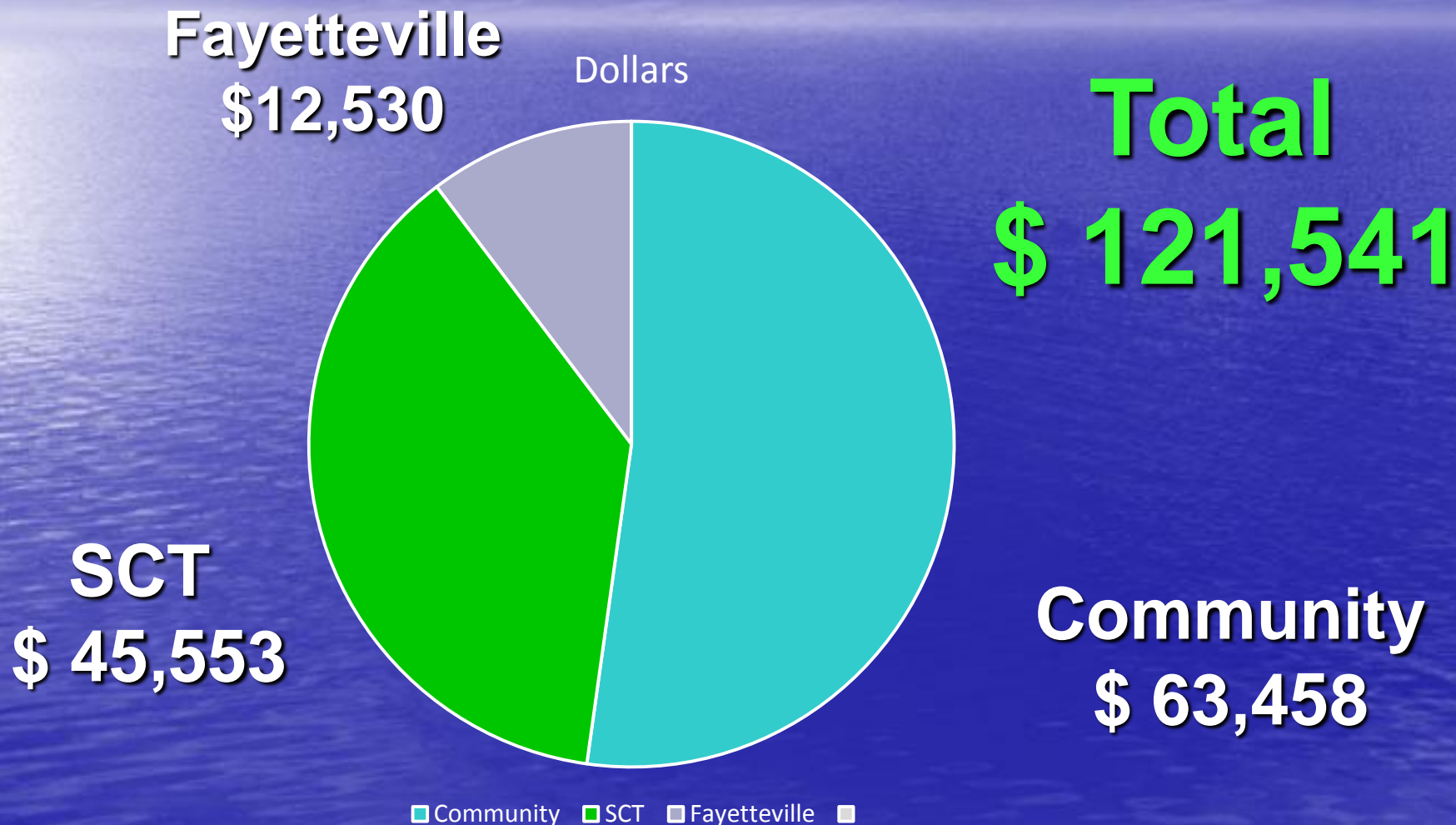
**In-Kind \$
\$ 42,227**

**Volunteers
398**

**Contributions
\$ 21,231**

**Volunteer hours
1,703
Value \$41,294**

Community Investment

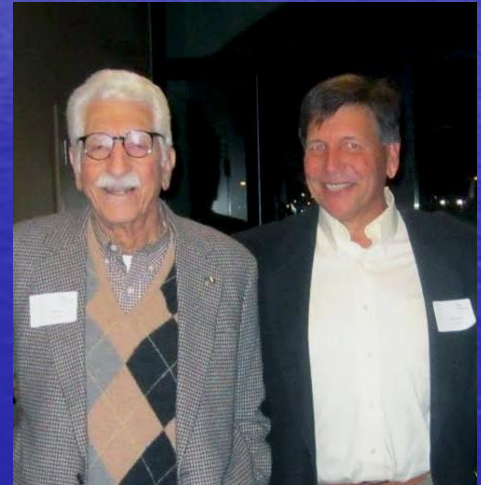


Proposed Timeline:

- ❖ Entrance Stonewall by mid March
- ❖ Welcome Center / bathrooms
– begin mid March - ?
- ❖ Utility completion – mid April
- ❖ Potential Opening date – May 1 ?

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Rossetti Memorial Pavilion



**Ravin Homes & the Home Builders Association
of Midwest GA Capital Campaign**

Programs and Opportunities:

- ❖ 4.3 miles Multi-Purpose trails; bike & pedestrian
- ❖ 1.4 miles of Pedestrian only trails
- ❖ Orienteering, scouting programs, geocaching
- ❖ Education; birding, wildlife research, nature camp
- ❖ 7.5 mile kayak / canoe paddling trail
- ❖ Family outings, picnics, fishing, reflection

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Park Goal: Connect people to nature and promote Education and Wellness



**Southern Conservation Trust believes in a
balance of development and conservation.**

**SCT works with landowners and other partners
to ensure that generations to come
will be able to enjoy our natural landscape.**



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Thank You !